Course Prefix Number: PLS 211
Credits: 3

Course Title: United States Government I

Course Description: Teaches structure, operation, and process of national, state, and local governments. Includes in-depth study of the three branches of government and public policy. PLS 211 and PLS 212 need not be taken in sequence. Part I of II. Prerequisite: Placement in ENG 111 or placement in Co-requisites ENG 111 and ENF 3. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose: (Who would benefit from taking this course?)

Course Prerequisites and Co-requisites:
Prerequisite: Placement in ENG 111 or placement in Co-requisites ENG 111 and ENF 3

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon completing the course, the student will be able to:

a. Examine the origins of the American system of government and the development of our federal Constitution;
b. Develop an appreciation of the Constitution's stability and adaptability to a changing America;
c. Examine the origins and development of the Bill of Rights;
d. Examine the responsibilities and performance of the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches of government;
e. Evaluate the federal bureaucracy in terms of its purpose and examine efforts to improve its operation;
f. Encourage the student to develop the habit of following the work of our government at the national, state, and local levels;
g. Demonstrate increased comprehension of how our political system works, and practice and learn to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses with some degree of objectivity;
h. Evaluate information and its sources critically, and incorporate selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system;
i. Draw appropriate conclusions and inferences;
j. Determine whether certain conclusions or consequences are supported by the information provided; and
k. Evaluate the strengths and relevance of arguments on a particular question or issue.

Major Topics to Be Included:

a. Historical background and development of the American Constitution
b. Federalism
c. The Bill of Rights and civil liberties
d. The distribution of powers and relationships within the branches of the national government (Executive, Legislative, Judicial)
e. The bureaucracy

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